

Amendments In the Claims

Please amend Claims 13, 17, 23 and 27. Please cancel Claim 17. Please add Claim 28.

1. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:
a network element port circuit comprising
a first input/output (I/O) port, a second I/O port and a third I/O port;
an optical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and
configured to
couple an optical network connector to a mounting surface, and
couple said optical network connector to said first I/O port;
an electrical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and
configured to
couple an electrical network connector to said mounting surface,
and
couple the electrical network connector to said second I/O port,
wherein
said optical connector interface and said electrical connector
interface are vertically aligned with one another with
respect to said mounting surface.
2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein
said electrical connector interface comprises a registered jack 45 (RJ-45)
interface.
3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein
said optical connector interface comprises an interface of a small form factor
pluggable (SFP) optical module.
4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein
said optical connector interface comprises an interface of a gigabit interface
converter (GBIC) optical module.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:
an electrical isolation circuit coupled to said RJ-45 interface.
6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein
said electrical isolation circuit comprises one or more magnetics components.
7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
an auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit, wherein
said first, second and third I/O ports are coupled to said auto-media
detection physical layer protocol circuit.
8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:
a visual indicator to indicate which of said optical connector interface and said
electrical connector interface is active on said network element port
circuit.
9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein
said visual indicator comprises at least one of a light emitting diode and a light
pipe.
10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2,
wherein said electrical connector interface comprises an upper connector interface
of said network element port circuit, and
wherein said optical connector interface comprises a lower connector interface of
said network element port circuit.
11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:
a first electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said optical
connector interface; and
a second electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said
electrical connector interface.
12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein
said mounting surface comprises a printed circuit board.

13. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus comprising:
 a network element port circuit comprising
an auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit, and
 first, second and third input/output (I/O) ports, wherein
 said first and second I/O ports are coupled to said third I/O port;
 an optical connector interface coupled to the network element port circuit at the
 first I/O port;
 an electrical connector interface coupled to the network element port circuit at the
 second I/O port, **wherein** ~~and~~
~~wherein~~ said optical connector interface and said electrical connector
 interface are substantially adjacent to one another along a line
 defined by an intersection of a connector-receiving plane of said
 network element port circuit and a connector-insertion plane of
 said network element port circuit.
14. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said electrical
 connector interface comprises:
 a registered jack 45 (RJ-45) interface.
15. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said optical connector
 interface comprises:
 an interface of a small form factor pluggable (SFP) optical module.
16. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said optical connector
 interface comprises:
 an interface of a gigabit interface converter (GBIC) optical module.
17. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim **13** ~~[[14]]~~, further comprising:
 an electrical isolation circuit coupled to said **electrical connector RJ-45**
 interface.
18. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said electrical isolation
 circuit comprises:
 one or more magnetics components.

19. Canceled.
20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising:
a visual indicator to indicate which of said optical connector interface and said
electrical connector interface is active on said network element port
circuit.
21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said a visual indicator
comprises:
at least one of a light emitting diode and a light pipe.
22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14,
wherein said electrical connector interface comprises an upper connector interface
of said network element port circuit, and
wherein said optical connector interface comprises a lower connector interface of
said network element port circuit.
23. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 13 ~~[[14]]~~, further comprising:
a first electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said optical
connector interface; and
a second electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said
electrical connector interface.
24. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:
coupling an optical connector interface at a first input/output (I/O) port of a
network element port circuit, wherein
said optical connector interface is further coupled to a third I/O port of
said network element port circuit and to a mounting surface;
coupling an electrical connector interface at a second I/O port of said network
element port circuit, wherein
said electrical connector interface is further coupled to the third I/O port of
said network element port circuit and to said mounting surface
such that said optical connector interface and said electrical
connector interface are vertically aligned with one another with
respect to said mounting surface, and

said electrical connector interface comprises a RJ-45 interface.

25. Canceled
26. (Previously Presented) The network element port circuit of claim 7, wherein said auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit is configured to
select a selected port from between said first and second I/O ports,
process a signal received on said selected port, and
transmit the processed signal from said third I/O port.
27. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 13 ~~[[19]]~~, wherein said auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit is configured to
select a selected port from between said first and second I/O ports,
process a signal received on said selected port, and
transmit the processed signal from said third I/O port.
28. **(New)** The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein
the optical connector interface is configured to be separably coupled to the optical
network connector, and
the electrical connector interface is configured to be separably coupled to the
electrical network connector.